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WISCONSIN
State Horticultural Society
BULLETIN No. 2

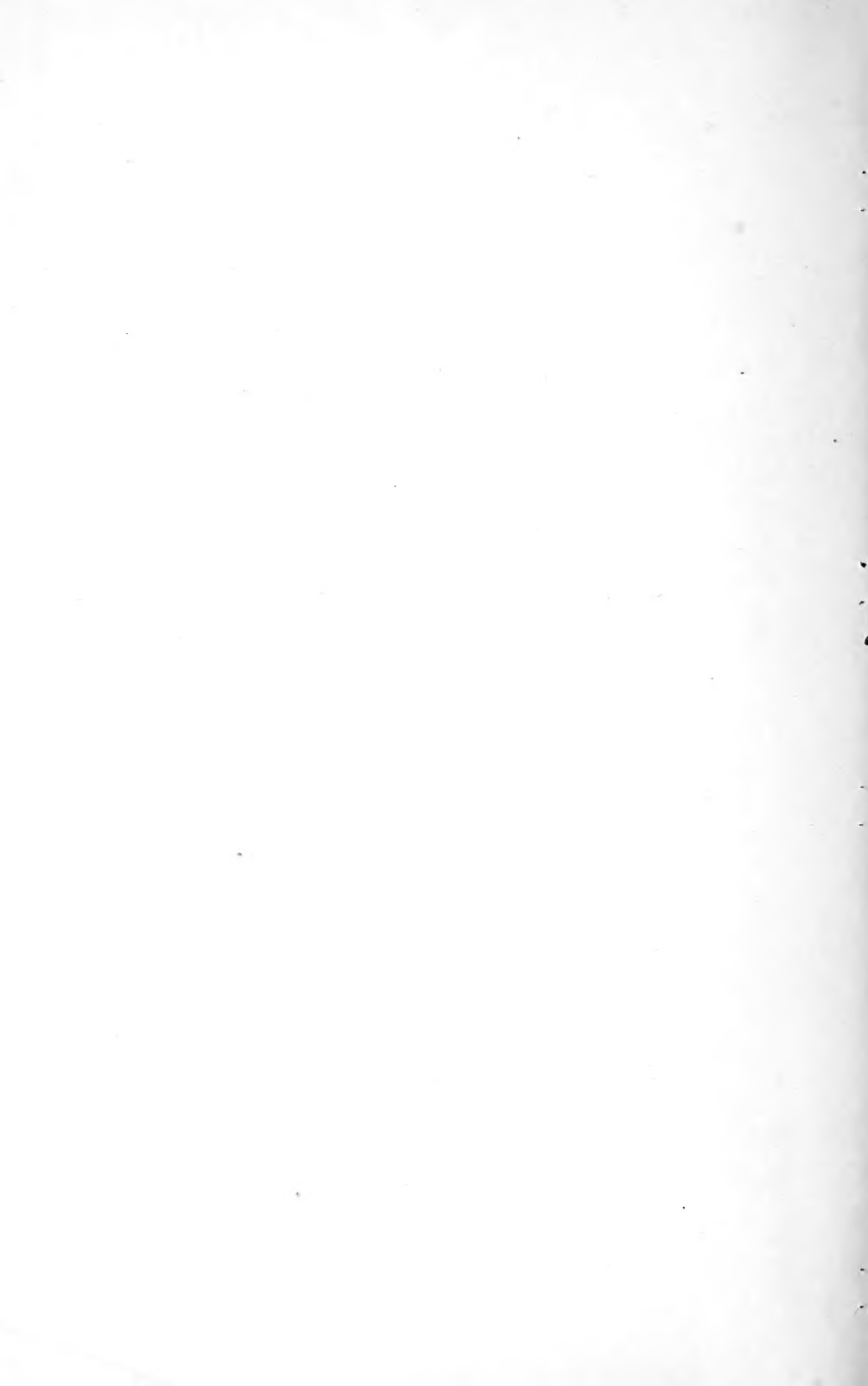
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Crane field, F.
Strawberries for the Home Garden

MADISON, WIS., APRIL, 1904

 **The Bulletins and Annual Reports of this Society are sent
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The Wisconsin State Horticultural Society.

PAST: Fifty-one years of profitable work.

PRESENT: (1) More interest manifested than ever before; (2) Four trial orchards established and maintained by the Society in Northern Wisconsin carrying fruit growing up to Lake Superior; (3) Valuable work in other fields.

FUTURE: Very promising. Limited only by the enthusiasm of its members, and that is unlimited.

MEMBERSHIP: Membership is not limited to professional cultivators. Every one who has a fruit tree, a berry bush, a flowering plant or even a hill of beans, is eligible. Even if you have none of these, join anyway, and learn how to cultivate at least one of them. The annual membership fee of \$1 may be sent to the Secretary at Madison.

HISTORY.

In 1853 a band of enthusiastic fruit growers met at Whitewater and organized the Wisconsin Fruit Growers' Association. This society held successful annual exhibitions until 1862.

In 1865 the Association met and re-organized, taking the name of **The Wisconsin State Horticultural Society.**

From that year until the present the Society has held annual or semi-annual meetings, given exhibitions and through its members and printed reports preached the gospel of fruits and flowers.

Like other industries fruit growing in Wisconsin has had its ups and downs. The early reports of the W. F. G. A. show that these pioneers had planted all manner of fruits, even quinces. Later, in the early seventies, the fierce Wisconsin winters swept away all the tender fruits and discouragement fell on all but a few of the faithful. The stout-hearted ones said, "If we cannot grow the Pippin and the Belle-fleur we will produce varieties that **will** grow," and they set about doing it. For twenty-five years members of the Wisconsin State Horticultural Society have been prying into the secret of nature and battling with the elements to find fruits fitted to Wisconsin conditions. The records of the work done by the members of the Society may be found in every part of the state.

The records of the Society are also written for all time in gold, silver and bronze, for at all great Expositions, including Chicago in 1893, Wisconsin fruit has won medals and unbounded admiration. A host of younger men and women are now rallying to carry on the work and share in the benefits, but their number is too small. The membership roll of our Society should number thousands instead of hundreds. Every man who tills an acre of ground, every woman who wants vegetables, fruits and flowers should be a member of the Society. Every one who reads this is cordially invited to become a member. It costs one dollar a year unless you are already a member of a local society, when fifty cents will be enough. The Annual Report and the Bulletins are sent free to members.

STRAWBERRIES FOR THE HOME GARDEN

F. CRANEFIELD

This little bulletin is intended as a guide for every one who wants strawberries for home use. It is for the home gardener only and not for the commercial grower. Many people, farmers as well as residents in villages and cities, buy strawberries for home use, when in most cases sufficient land is available to produce an abundance of berries. A space 20x50 feet if well tilled may produce annually more strawberries than the average family can consume. Six bushels of strawber-

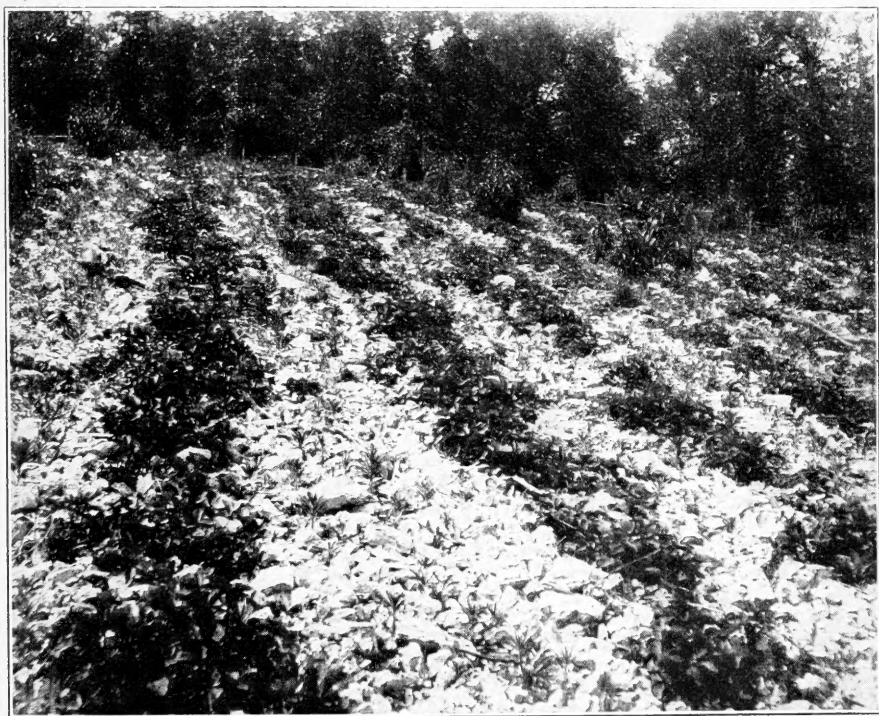


FIG. 1. Showing strawberry plants on very stony land.

ries were picked from a patch of this size last year in a private garden in Madison. Every one who has a square rod of tillable ground may have strawberries.

Soil.—The character of the soil is of but little importance. Any good garden land will produce strawberries. An extreme case is

shown in Fig. 1, where the surface is covered with stones. Fig. 2 shows a sample of the crop obtained on such land.

The soil in the Madison garden mentioned above is stiff clay over swamp muck, which in turn overlays fine sand

Site.—The site is matter of slight importance if not too far from the house. The fruit will ripen earlier and the blossoms suffer less from late spring frosts if located on slightly elevated land sloping gently to east or south.

Soil Preparation.—The ground should be deeply plowed and in every way as well prepared as for corn before planting. On light soils it is a good plan to manure and plow in the fall, as strawberry plants do not start well in very loose and mellow soil. For very heavy soils spring plowing may be preferable.



FIG 2 A sample of the crop produced by plants shown in fig 1.

Manure.—Use only thoroughly decayed (unleached) manure. Not only is fresh manure unavailable as plant food but the decaying processes which it undergoes in the soil may cause injury to the roots of the newly set plants if in contact with them.

Best Time for Planting.—Early in spring, as soon as the ground can be worked, is the very best time to plant. Good results, however, may be had by planting later, even at flowering time, if the plants are carefully handled and shaded after planting. Nothing is gained by fall planting for if the plants are allowed to fruit the following spring

a poor growth will result that will result in a very scant crop the following year. We should encourage plant making **this** year that we may have an abundance of fruit **next** year.

Plants.—Good plants may be had of our Wisconsin nurserymen at reasonable prices. It may also be possible to get thrifty plants from

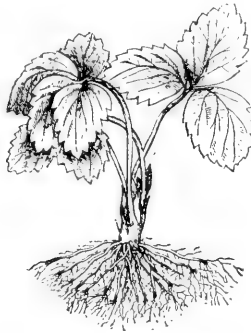


FIG. 3. Showing the branching of roots as a result of root pruning.

a neighbor, but in this case care must be taken to secure only new plants,—less than one year old. Only young runner plants of the current season's growth that have never borne fruit should be used. These may be known by their light colored roots; plants more than one year old have dark (black) roots.



FIG. 4. Showing manner of transplanting with dibber; inserting roots.

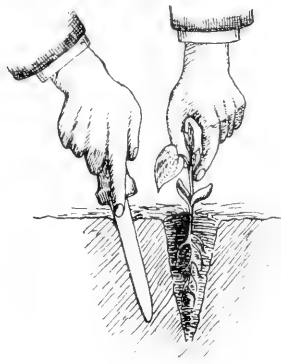


FIG. 5. Pressing earth about roots.

Planting.—For the home garden the plants should be set about two feet apart in rows four feet apart.

The plants should be prepared for planting by removing the old leaves and stems and shortening the roots, both to facilitate planting

and encourage branching (Fig. 3). After trimming dip the roots in water and pack snugly in a basket with damp chaff or straw to prevent drying by sun and wind. With a dibber or garden trowel make a narrow and deep opening as shown in Fig. 4, spread the roots fan-shaped and tuck them into this V-shaped opening, close the opening with dibber as shown in Fig. 5 and tramp firmly close to the plant. In this



FIG. 6. "Do not plant by spreading the roots horizontally."

way the roots are down in moist earth. Do not plant by spreading the roots horizontally as shown in Fig. 6, for in this way the roots are all too near the surface.

Do not set too high with the roots exposed as shown in Fig. 7.

Do not set too deep, as shown in Fig. 8, with the "crown" covered with earth, or the plant will surely die. Fig. 9 shows proper way.

In large plantations the "spade" method is employed. A spade is thrust into the ground and drawn slightly forward. The plant is



FIG. 7. "Do not set too high with the roots exposed."

FIG. 8. "Do not set too deep"

FIG. 9. This is a better plan.

then placed in the opening behind the spade, the spade withdrawn and the opening closed firmly by again thrusting the spade into the ground close to the roots.

Watering.—If the ground is dry at planting time it may be advisable to apply water. This should be done by pouring it into the hole before the plant is set. Pouring a little water on the surface after the plant is set is apt to do more harm than good. Only the surface soil is moistened, which attracts the feeding roots to the surface, where they quickly perish.

Cultivation.—Keep the soil loose, mellow and free from weeds throughout the season by frequent cultivation. An adjustable one-horse cultivator is a good tool to use. Run close to the plants at first and as the runners stretch out into the space between the rows, close up cultivator allowing the plants to set thickly in matted rows two feet wide, thus leaving a two-foot path between rows. Care should be taken to keep the rows full by training runners so as to fill gaps.



FIG. 10. Illustrating the "matted row" system of strawberry culture.

If the ground is rich and the season favorable too many plants may set. In this case as the season advances remove the surplus plants until they stand about six inches apart.

Remove all blossoms from the parent plants as soon as they appear. All of the energies of these plants must be directed to plant making the first season and not wasted in the production of flowers and fruit. At the end of the season we should have a bed that will appear like the one shown in Fig. 10.

Winter Protection.—As soon as the ground is slightly frozen in the fall the bed should be lightly covered with clean straw, or better still, marsh hay. This covering is not designed to prevent freezing but to prevent alternate thawing and freezing. Some growers use sawdust for covering with good success.

One Year After Planting.—After settled warm weather has arrived and the plants begin to push into growth the winter mulch should be

removed. A large part of it may be raked into the paths between the rows, where it will serve to keep down weed growth as well as preserve moisture. Some growers remove the mulch entirely and cultivate the space as in the preceding season. In this case the mulch must be replaced as the fruit begins to ripen in order to keep it clean. The bed should be kept free from grass and weeds which will appear in abundance among the plants in the matted rows. If all these things be done we should be rewarded in June with an abundance of fruit.

Protection from Frost.—Late spring frosts may destroy the blossoms, as these are very susceptible to cold. The mulching may be used to cover the plants when frost threatens. It may be forked lightly over the plants after sundown and removed the next morning. It serves as a blanket, retaining the heat about the plants. This may be repeated as often as frost threatens, at slight expense.

The Second Season—Renewal.—After the fruit is harvested mow the plants close to the ground, rake the bed free of the cut leaves and

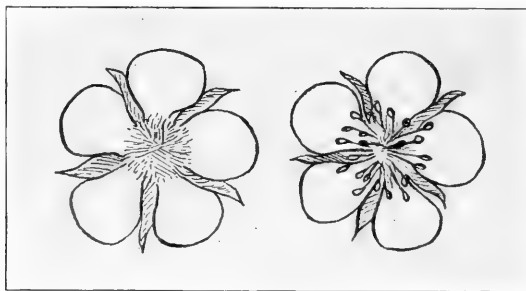


FIG. 11. Showing an imperfect or pistillate strawberry flower.

FIG. 12. A perfect or staminate flower.

mulching and burn them. In this way insects and diseases are destroyed; then plow a shallow furrow from each side of the row into the paths, leaving a strip of plants about 8 inches wide; clean out this narrowed row, cutting out the old plants and as many others as may be necessary to leave the plants 8 to 10 inches apart. After this cleaning and thinning cultivate as in the first year and if season is not too dry these remaining plants will send out runners and again form matted rows. By taking a new portion of the row each year for the renewal the plantation might be continued indefinitely, but in practice it is scarcely profitable. It is generally considered less expensive and more satisfactory to plant a new bed once in two years at most, and many good growers retain the plantation but one year.

Varieties.—Some varieties of strawberries produce only imperfect flowers similar to the one shown in Fig. 11. These flowers have no stamens and are therefore incapable of self-pollination. It is import-

ant to keep this fact in mind when selecting varieties, for if imperfect-flowered varieties only are selected no fruit will be borne. A small part of the plantation at least must be of kinds bearing perfect flowers like the one in Fig. 12. Nurserymen indicate in their catalogues the imperfect varieties by the abbreviation "Imp."

The amateur as well as the professional soon learns that in the selection of varieties he must be guided by local condition of soil, climate, etc., and that no list can be given that will be satisfactory over any wide area.

The following is given as a "trial list." All are well known to commercial growers and are fairly satisfactory under widely varying conditions:

Perfect-Flowered: Bederwood, Splendid, Lovett.

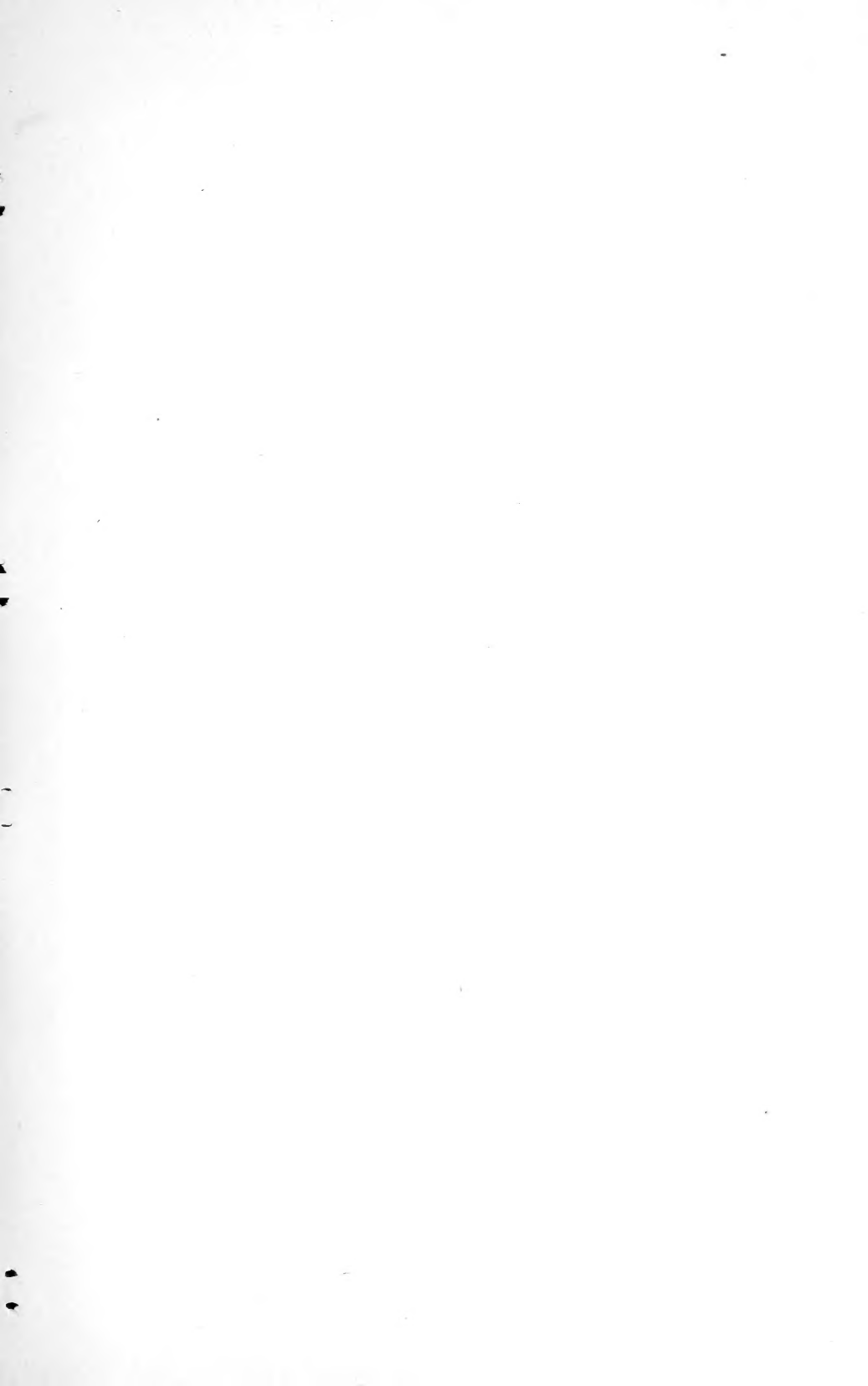
Imperfect-Flowered: Warfield, Haverland, Crescent, Glen Mary.

If but two varieties are wanted, Bederwood and Warfield may be selected, the former early, the latter midseason to late.

Acknowledgements.

Figs. 1 and 2 are from Bull. No. 7, Missouri State Fruit Experiment Station, and are used by permission of the Director, Mr. Paul Evans.

Figs. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 are from Principles of Plant Culture by E. S. Goff and are used by permission of the University Co-Operative Association of Madison. Fig. 10 is used by permission of Coe, Converse and Edwards Co., Ft. Atkinson, Wis. Figs. 6, 11 and 12 are from original drawings by Miss Jennie Pitman of Madison.



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